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accept dismissal by the commissioners, the ousted officer for some time prevented the new incumbent from assuming his duties. This state of affairs was remedied, at least for a time, through an affirmation of the commissioners' action in response to an appeal to the superior court. A further appeal from this decision has, however, been made. A recall petition was also started to remove the mayor and two of the commissioners.

A. M. H.

**Fixing Responsibility for Fires.** In the matter of fire-prevention Commissioner Adamson of New York City is leaving no stone unturned in the effort to make property owners realize their responsibility in taking every precaution against the possibility of fires through carelessness or negligence. For one thing, the outcome of a test case brought by the fire commissioner against the owner of factory buildings where the automatic sprinklers ordered by the fire prevention bureau had not been installed, has finally been decided in the city's favor and the factory owner has been ordered by the appellate division of the supreme court to pay the costs of extinguishing the fire. This is the first case of its kind ever brought by New York City and was first decided in favor of the defendant by the lower court. It was appealed by Commissioner Adamson and the decision unanimously reversed by the higher court. This established the principle that the cost of fire-extinguishing in cases of willful negligence in disobeying fire laws or the special orders of the fire department relating to fire-prevention measures, must be paid by the guilty persons when these occur on their premises, as well as the cost of all loss which neighbors may suffer. Mr. Adamson proposes to submit to the next legislature a bill incorporating this new rule and a provision by which a man who has a fire will be regarded as a public enemy rather than an object for sympathy because he has endangered lives and property.

A. M. H.

A useful table is printed in the April issue of *The American City* (page 348) which sets forth the comparative strength and cost of fire departments for the year 1914 in the sixty leading cities of the United States. This compilation for fire departments, as well as one giving corresponding figures for police departments, has been made by Mr. H. A. Stuart, city statistician of Minneapolis.

A. M. H.